

panied by an increase in personnel and in stations. The number of pilots had to be increased from about 420 to 2,500; aircraftmen and aircrafthands from 3,700 to 20,000; while fifty new stations were needed. The number of Flying Training Schools was raised from five to eleven (including Leuchars, which caters for the Fleet Air Arm); while at the same time their duties were to be cut down. Elementary flying training is no longer to be given at an F.T.S. but at a civil flying school, while the F.T. Schools concentrate on advanced training. Consequently the number of civil schools was increased from four to thirteen. It is a programme which has involved an immense amount of work and organisation.

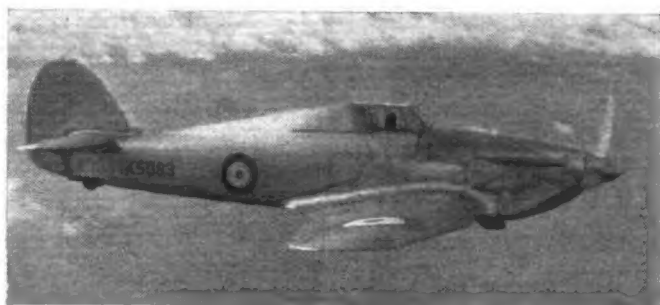
Early in the year came the celebration of the King's Jubilee and His Majesty's decision to review the Royal Air Force. The honour thus bestowed on the Force gave the greatest satisfaction to all ranks. It might have been supposed that with so much work of expansion on hand the review might have been kept down to the simplest form. As a matter of fact, it took a far from simple form, and required a high degree of organisation and the nicest synchronisation. That everything went off according to plan without the slightest hitch gave a taste of the quality of the Air Staff. They came through with the traditional flying colours. Yet all the while the work of expansion went on unchecked.

Then came the outbreak of war between Italy and Abyssinia. The Fleet and the aircraft carriers went to the Mediterranean, and Sir Samuel Hoare has spoken of British reinforcements in Egypt, Malta and Aden. Details of those reinforcements cannot, of course, be published, but the state of general tension cannot have helped the Air Ministry in its work of raising new squadrons and training new officers and airmen. Air Chief Marshal Sir Robert Brooke-Popham had to leave his permanent post as Inspector General of the R.A.F. and take command of the Middle East. Yet still the work has gone on.

### Problems of Personnel

The pages of *Flight* which are devoted to R.A.F. news have recorded week by week the various steps by which the Air Ministry is dealing with its various problems. At the beginning of the year it was decided that the air squadrons at Oxford and Cambridge Universities should accept all candidates for permanent commissions, and that when accepted they should go to Cranwell for final training, thus maintaining a common interest in all permanent officers. The periods of service of many Short Service and Medium Service officers have been extended. Many more applications for S.S. commissions have been invited, and the response by suitable young men has been most gratifying. The rules for accepting airmen for training as sergeant pilots have been relaxed in various ways, and the flying service of existing airmen pilots has been extended.

In procuring new aircraft, many of the old and somewhat hidebound rules about acceptance have been dis-



**OUTSTANDING MILITARY TYPES.** The fastest produced during the year was the Hawker monoplane (top), which, fitted with a Rolls-Royce Merlin engine, is now being tested. The Gloster Gladiator (below) is the first four-gun single-seater to be adopted, and does 260 m.p.h. at 15,500 ft. with a 715 h.p. Mercury VIII.

pensed with, and some new types have even been ordered from an examination of the drawing-board plans in the designers' offices. Several well-proved types have been given an improved performance by the installation of new marks of engine. Notable among the new types produced, though definite orders have not yet been placed for all of them, are the Hawker monoplane high-speed, the Gloster Gauntlet and the Gloster Gladiator fighters, the Bristol medium bomber with two Pegasus engines, the Vickers medium bomber Wellesley with one Pegasus, and the Avro Anson general reconnaissance machine. The Overstrand has been taken into service during the year. The Fleet Air Arm is being supplied with two types of T.S.R. machines, the Blackburn Shark and the Fairey Swordfish, and with the catapult amphibian Walrus. New flying boats are the Short Singapore III, the Supermarine Scapa and Stranraer, and the Saro London. For army co-operation there is the Hawker Hector with Napier Dagger engine. For overseas squadrons the Vickers Vincent and the Hawker Hardy give increased powers.

Eleven new regular squadrons have commenced to form during the year, and this has entailed the moves of several existing squadrons to new stations, some of them only for a time. The Central Flying School has left Wittering

**OUTSTANDING MILITARY TYPES.** The H.P. 51 bomber transport (two 760 h.p. Tiger VI) has slotted flaps which give it a wide speed range. The Avro Anson (below) has been adopted as a standard coastal reconnaissance type. It does 188 m.p.h. with two 310 h.p. Cheetah IX's.

